WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for distributing programming, the method comprising:
   transmitting a first set of programs in real time according to a schedule of programming;
   storing a second set of programs on a server, at least one of the first set of programs having a counterpart in the second set of programs; and
   playing at least one of the second set of programs from the server under the control of a user.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein playing at least one of the second set of programs from the server under the control of the user comprises switching from transmission of a particular program according to the schedule of programming to transmission of a counterpart to the particular program from the server.

3. The method according to claim 2 wherein switching from transmission of the particular program according to the schedule of programming to transmission of the counterpart to the particular program from the server comprises processing a program-control signal from a user.

4. The method according to claim 3 wherein switching from transmission of the particular program according to the schedule of programming to transmission of the counterpart to the particular program from the server further comprises playing the counterpart program from the server from the beginning of the counterpart program.

5. The method according to claim 3 wherein switching from transmission of the particular program according to the schedule of programming to transmission of the counterpart to the particular program from the server further comprises:
   ascertaining a temporal position for the transmission of the particular program according to the schedule of programming; and
   playing the counterpart to the particular program from the server from substantially the same temporal position;
   whereby the user perceives transmission of the particular program to be substantially uninterrupted.

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1   6.   The method according to claim 5 wherein processing the program-

2 control signal from a user comprises:

3   receiving a wireless program-control instruction from a remote control; and

4   determining a desired program-control manipulation in accordance with the

5 received program-control signal.

1   7.   The method according to claim 6 further comprising executing the

2 desired program-control manipulation on the counterpart to the particular program from the

3 server.

1   8.   The method according to claim 1 further comprising transmitting a

2 menu of programs from which the user can select the at least one of the second set of

3 programs from the server to be played under the control of the user.

1   9.   The method according to claim 8 further comprising verifying the

2 user's authorization to access programs from the server.

1   10.   The method according to claim 9 wherein verifying the user's

2 authorization to access programs from the server is performed after transmitting the menu of

3 programs and wherein the menu of programs identifies only programs stored on the server.

1   11.   The method according to claim 1 further comprising transmitting a

2 display of the schedule of programming from which the user can select the at least one of the

3 second set of programs from the server to be played under the control of the user.

1   12.   The method according to claim 11 further comprising verifying the

2 user's authorization to access programs from the server.

1   13.   The method according to claim 11 wherein the at least one of the

2 second set of programs is a counterpart to a particular program of the first set of programs

3 and wherein playing the at least one of the second set of programs from the server under the

4 control of the user comprises playing the counterpart from its beginning.

1   14.   The method according to claim 11 wherein the at least one of the

2 second set of programs is a counterpart to a particular program of the first set of programs

3 and wherein playing the at least one of the second set of programs from the server under the

4   control of the user comprises playing the counterpart at a position defined for the particular

5   program by the schedule of programming.

1   15.   The method according to claim 1 further comprising:

2   determining whether the user is authorized to access programs from the server;

3   and

4   transmitting promotional material describing access to programs from the

5   server if it is determined that the user is not authorized to access programs from the server.

1   16.   The method according to claim 1 wherein the server is located

2   remotely from the user.

1   17.   The method according to claim 1 wherein the server is located on a set-

2   top box local to the user.

1   18.   A method for distributing programming, the method comprising:

2   transmitting a first set of programs in real time according to a programming

3   schedule;

4   storing a second set of programs on a server, at least one of the first set of

5   programs having a counterpart in the second set of programs;

6   detecting a request from a user for program control over one of the programs

7   in the first set of programs;

8   determining whether the requested program has a counterpart program stored

9   on the server; and

10   playing the counterpart program from the server under the control of the user

11   if it is one of the second set of programs stored on the server.

1   19.   The method according to claim 18 wherein detecting a request from a

2   user for program control over one of the programs in the first set of programs comprises:

3   receiving a wireless request from a remote control; and

4   processing the wireless request to determine a desired program.

1   20.   The method according to claim 18 further comprising verifying the

2   user's authorization to access programs from the server.

1   21.   The method according to claim 18 wherein the server is located

2 remotely from the user

1   22.   The method according to claim 18 wherein the server is located on a

2 set-top box local to the user.

1   23.   A method for distributing programming, the method comprising:

2   transmitting a first set of programs in real time according to a schedule of

3 programming;

4   storing a second set of programs on a server, at least one of the first set of

5 programs having a counterpart in the second set of programs;

6   receiving a program-control signal from a user;

7   ascertaining a temporal position for the transmission of a particular program

8 according to the schedule of programming when the program-control signal is received; and

9   switching from transmission of the particular program according to the

10 schedule of programming to transmission of the counterpart program from the server at

11 substantially the same temporal position.

1   24.   The method according to claim 23 further comprising:

2   determining a desired program-control manipulation in accordance with the

3 received program-control signal; and

4   executing the desired program-control manipulation on the program from the

5 server.